515 Every farm has its own saun (steam bath) which is heated on Saturday night, and here the whole family has a thorough perspiration and washing, followed in summer by swimming in a river or lake, if one is near. In the towns are operated big commercial bathhouses which are patronized [757] by people who have none of their own. This sauna tradition is an old and cherished Finnish-Estonian custom and for centuries has been used also for medicinal purposes--to cure colds, muscular aches and the like.

777 There are many superstitions and prejudices in Estonia which in modern times are no longer seriously believed. A few common ones are:

[787] On New Year's Eve, melted tin is cast into cold water and the future is prophesied from the shape of the cast.

If the first person one meets on New Year's